The Valley Patriot

"Congress shall make no law..."

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BASH EDITION!

April, 2023
Volume 20, Issue 4
Edition #234

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$53K for College Scholarships

The amount on the check may say $9,465 for our Lawrence High JrROTC - Eugene Smith Scholarship recipient Jaraliz Morales at our annual BASH! By the time we finshed with the check presentation, however, that number went up by $1,035 for a total of $10,500. The highest BASH Scholarship check ever presented at the Valley Patriot's Annual BASH! Our grand total for this year's scholarship drive was $53,445!

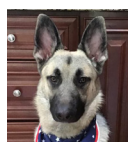
INDEX

Al Kaprielian
PAGE 21

Vets.....1,11,16, 23
Editorial.....2
Dracut.....4,8
Health.....4,5,12,24,27
State.....5,12,24
Lawrence.....6,11-13,20,27
Methuen.....5,6,13,17
Kane/Pets.....9,20,21
North Andover.....10
Salem, N.H.....16
Haverhill/Amesbury.....18, 19
Notebook.....20-21
REAL ESTATE.....22
Salisbury.....24
TV/Religion.....25

Sen. Pavel Payano
PAGE 5

Brian Genest
Dracut
PAGE 4



Kane
PAGE 9

Bill Cushing
TV TALK
PAGE 25

Valley Patriot of the Month

Kevin Lynch Receives John Ratka - Hero Veteran Award

John Cuddy
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

On Friday March 31st at the Annual Valley Patriot Bash, Scholarship and Award Night, Kevin Lynch was awarded the Master Chief John Ratka Veteran's Award! Interviewing US Navy Seabee and Haverhill Police Sergeant Kevin Lynch uncovered a family tradition of US Military Service. Kevin served as a Construction Mechanic First Class with the US Navy Construction Battalions. His wife Shannon served as a Radioman in the US Navy and retired after 27 years of service as an Information Systems Technician Chief Petty Officer. Shannon's son, born while she was stationed at Naval Station Adak Island, Alaska, served in the United States Marine Corp. Shannon was assigned to the Naval Security Group Activity at Adak. The couple also has a son-in-law that served as a US Marine.

The Information Systems Technician rating is one of the most diverse ratings in the US Navy and US Coast Guard. The Navy's IT rating was created in 1998 from a combination of two previous Navy ratings radioman (RM) and data processing technician (DP). A third rating, cryptologic technician communications (CTO) merged with IT in October 2005. During February 2010, the IT rating was incorporated into the Information Dominance Corps.

The US Navy Sailors in the Information Dominance Corp consists of Information Systems Technicians, Intelligence Specialists, Cryptologic Technicians, and Aerographer's Mates. In the Veteran's community, there is a grassroots movement, to name a ship after US Navy Senior Chief Shannon Kent. On January 16, 2019, CTICS(IW/EXW) Shannon M. Kent was killed in action in Manbij, Syria while supporting Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve. She is the only female cryptologist killed in action in the history of naval cryptology, leaving behind two small children and a husband. Valley Patriot readers can write a simple letter to their US Representative and two US Senators to assist with this goal.

Initially serving in the US Navy as a Radioman, Chief Shannon Lynch deployed to Al Asad Iraq with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 27. Chief Lynch also deployed to Afghanistan with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22. While serving with the Seabees, Chief Lynch earned the Seabee Combat Warfare designation. During

HERO: PAGE 23

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MassFiscal Praises Democrat Auditor's Efforts to Audit Legislature

Conservative fiscal watchdog group MassFiscal Alliance has not been kind to Massachusetts State Auditor Diana DiZoglio. They opposed her election to the legislature and the senate, as well as her successful state-wide run for Auditor last year.

We have been trying to convince the partisans at MassFiscal for years that Diana DiZoglio is the real deal and will expose corruption, even in her own party. They fought us every step of the way, even impugning our conservative bona fides.

But, now Paul Craney and the conservatives at MassFiscal may finally be coming around.

We are glad to see MassFiscal finally starting to look at issues and not party. We look forward to more objectivity from them in the future. The following is a press release we received from MassFiscal last month.

BOSTON – Following the announcement from the state auditor's office that they intend to conduct an audit of the Massachusetts legislature, the Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance released the following statement in support of the proposal.

"Massachusetts is the only state in the country in which all three branches of our state government—the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature—exempt themselves from public records laws. By most accounts we have possibly the least transparent state government in the country and it's a commonly held belief that the legislature is where transparency and good governance principles go to die. If Auditor DiZoglio is actually able to make good on her promise to audit the legislature, it will be a welcomed check on the power of the most opaque state government in the country and a victory for the people of the Commonwealth," said Paul D. Craney, spokesman for the Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance.

The Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance also pressed for the Auditor's office to expand the scope of their audits to include the other two branches of government claiming exemptions, the Governor's office and the judiciary.

"Before taking office, Governor Healey pledged to do things differently and promised she would not exempt herself from the state public records laws like her predecessors.

When this was put to the test by members of the media earlier this year, she failed to deliver on that promise and exempted herself.

As the auditor's office continues to reassert its power of oversight, they should strongly consider auditing the Governor's office to see what exactly is so important that forced Governor Healey to completely renege on a campaign promise," noted Craney. ◊

Valley Patriot BASH Raises $53,445 for Nine Local Students Going to College

Every year, Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan holds an anniversary BASH to honor police officers, firefighters, veterans, and community activists, as well as to raise scholarship money for local high school seniors.

"When we walked out of the room last year we had raised and given out $33,000 in scholarship money and that was nearly double what we had raised the year before COVID," Duggan said.

"I remember thinking, 'how in the world are we are ever going to top this?'"

This year Duggan and the Valley Patriot's charity team not only topped last year's all time total, but raised more than $53,445, distributing the funds to nine students hailing from Lawrence High School, Haverhill High School, North Andover High, The Greater Lawrence Tech, Whittier Tech, Salem, N.H., and Methuen High.

"Each scholarship has a certain criteria. So, what we do is reach out to people we know in each high school, maybe a principal, a school committee member, or an advisor, and ask them to recruit applicants for the scholarships. Once the student is vetted and accepted we post the student's name and school and ask people on Facebook to donate to that specific scholarship."

"So, for example, we have our Michelle DeLuca Benedetti Scholarship for a Haverhill student going into public safety. Once a student going into that field is chosen, I post his bio and photo on all of our social media pages, but also on all the Haverhill Alumni social media pages. Then we send out mailings to local businesses in Haverhill with that student's photo and bio soliciting donations. We do this for each scholarship."

"When someone makes a donation, I post a thank you on-line with the amount, and then add that amount to the previous total and post that as well, so that the donors and the recipients have full transparency and know that 100% of every penny we get goes directly to the kids." Duggan said that people make donations right up to the minute they hand the check to the student at the annual BASH, noting this year one student increased her amount by $1,035 as the giant check was being presented. (See page 11) ◊

2023 GRAND TOTAL!

The Valley Patriot 19th Anniversary BASH March31st

L.H.S. - JrROTC (Jeraliz Morales)	$10,600 **
COADY - N. Andover (Cam Reiland)	$10,000 **
Gr. Law. Tech (Arielle Cavaretta)	$6,125 **
SPECIAL NEEDS (Vanessa Delacruz Sanches)	$5,700 **
METHUEN - STUDIO 21 (James Sugden)	$5,475 **
WHITTIER (Arturo Zuniga)	$5,410 **
BENEDETTI HAVERHILL (Liam Robertson)	$5,335 **
EDMUND LO SCHOLARSHIP	$2,500
GR. LAW. SURPRISE SCHOLARSHIP	$2,300

Includes Dan Strange Memorial Scholarship & John Ratka Memorial Scholarship

TOTAL $53,445

The Valley Patriot is published monthly before the tenth of each month by Valley Patriot, Inc., 75 Main St., North Andover, MA 01845. All contents Copyright (c) 2021, Valley Patriot, Inc. All rights reserved. Subscriptions are $60 per year and sent via U.S. Mail.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Valley Patriot, Inc., PO Box 453, North Andover, MA 01845.

Letters to the editor, columns and op/eds can be submitted to **valleypatriot@aol**.com. The Valley Patriot is not responsible for the opinions expressed in submitted letters or columns. It is the policy of The Valley Patriot not to edit or exclude submitted material based on content.

PHONE: *(978) 771-4091*
www.valleypatriot.com

News tips: Send anonymous news-tips to valleypatriot@aol.com. We respect the anonymity of our sources if requested.

President/Publisher: Tom Duggan, Jr.
SALES: (978) 771-4091

Corrections: Please contact the editors at ***valleypatriot@aol.com***

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The Valley Patriot is printed by Graphic Development in West Hanover, MA

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EYE ON DRACUT

Sound of Silence Speaks Volumes in Dracut

By Brian Genest
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

Things are going well in Dracut right now and it's not by accident. It's because the right people are in charge of town government. And the wrong people aren't, thankfully.

Since taking over the job three years ago, Town Manager Ann Vandal has been making a tremendous difference for our town. And she's done so in a tough environment. She was hired by a divided board, after the previous town manager was shown the door and politics had polluted the search process for a new manager. She inherited and cleaned up a town procurement scandal. She was forced to deal with all the ramifications of the pandemic on town operations, employees and citizens.

Despite the circumstances and the challenges, on Ann Vandal's watch, Dracut is in better shape than it has been in quite some time. Town finances are in solid shape. School spending is on the rise. Capital improvement projects are being worked on all over town. We're trying to balance growth and development with open space, preservation, and conservation. There's a strong focus on economic development, including bringing in new businesses and supporting existing ones. Morale at town hall is high. People in town are optimistic about our future.

Unfortunately, there's a small group of negative voices in town who do nothing but try to tear down our success. It's a tiny-but-vocal "trash what's happening in Dracut" clan. On the airwaves, social media and anywhere else they can, they try to paint a different picture. They want you to believe that Dracut isn't doing well right now. They want you to believe the town isn't headed in the right direction. They want you to believe that our best days are behind us. In other words, they don't want you to believe your own two eyes.

Meanwhile, they attack elected officials, their spouses, and friends. They attack private citizens. They attack business owners. What's happening in Dracut isn't to their liking because they don't care about seeing our town be successful. They care about power and patronage.

They give Dracut a reputation for dirty politics and keep good, qualified people from running for office, from volunteering for town boards and from getting involved in the community.

Speaking of which, if they say things are so bad in Dracut right now, why aren't there any challengers running for the Board of Selectmen, School Committee or Housing Authority? Here's why: Dracut is in great shape today.

Even perennial candidate Phil Thibault, a nine-time loser who has come up short in contests against all five sitting selectmen, finally took a seat on the electoral sidelines this year, thankfully. Spoiler alert: Phil Thibault has his sights on next year's election and Selectman

Joe DiRocco's seat, which he's already lost three times. Perhaps Phil Thibault would be less of a failure if his talking points didn't include calling Dracut sleepy and saying our town is starting to rot, considering nothing could be further from the truth.

GENEST: PAGE 12

When Landlord Adds To The Extinction Of Local Doctors

Bharani Padmanabhan,
MD PhD

The ills that characterize the American medical system over the past 20 years have been personally experienced by us in our own lives. Not enough time with our own physician, no one getting back with the test results or getting insurance approval for that medicine etc. When children age out of pediatric clinics, good luck finding a decent PCP.

Corporate executives decided they knew better how to run hospitals and clinics because they knew how to run soft drink bottlers or motels. The Delaware shareholder model captured medicine. The problem is neither patients nor doctors are the shareholders, and instead both are required to maximize shareholder value - meaning patients are made to compromise on their care, and physicians are made to compromise on their standards.

One early example was Tufts Health Plan's Secure Horizons HMO, which gave physicians a set sum of money per patient per year, and incentivized denial of services, exactly like food service in prisons. Private equity fund Cerberus' Steward Healthcare Medicaid Accountable Care Organization (ACO = HMO) similarly incentivizes doctors to deny care as much as possible outside of a narrow set of care metrics which make healthcare look good on paper but are poor indicators of true outcomes. It's only about maximizing shareholder value. For the Massachusetts government it's all about playing games that make money for the powerful hospital sector and shifting blame when it inevitably falls apart.

Burnout levels amongst physicians in Massachusetts are at the worst ever. Doctors no longer recommend the medical profession to their kids. The real shareholders love that because replacing doctors with physician assistants and nurse practitioners maximizes shareholder value without having to deal with independent professionals and their pesky Hippocratic oaths.

The impact on the classic Marcus Welby show, the family doctors celebrated by Norman Rockwell, the doc on Main Street who you've known your whole life and gone fishing with or done carpentry work for, has been devastating.

Like intact families, family physicians are vital for the health of our communities. They see everyone, they know – everyone. Their care is holistic, they don't identify you with your insurance plan, or your diagnosis. And they have now been forced to spend just eight minutes per patient, and deal with only one problem per visit, because that maximizes shareholder value. Care is not holistic anymore. Family physicians work on the assembly line now, except the line moves people, not cars.

Little wonder then that independent physicians have been pushed out of business in droves. Nationwide, less than a third of physicians have any practice ownership, the lowest number to date. And the Mass Medical Society has done nothing to stop the slide.

As if the corporate consolidation of medicine is not bad enough, consider what was done to a local physician by his landlord. Dr. Ryan Welter MD PhD practiced family medicine in Raynham and occupied two suites within a medical office building ideally located off local highways. The same building also contained an orthopedic clinic which was growing and on course to merging with University Orthopedics, a corporate group from Rhode Island. The orthopedic clinic needed more space. Dr. Welter's clinic just happened to be in the way, as the landlord saw it.

According to the complaint in Norfolk Superior, the landlord, a William Whelan of New Bedford's Whelan and Associates, decided that it would maximize shareholder value, meaning his investors and himself, if he could contrive a way to throw Dr. Welter's independent clinic out and offer that space to the corporate behemoth present in sixteen locations across two states. Dr. Welter complains that Whelan engineered a cold plan to evict his long-running clinic and roll the red carpet out to deep corporate pockets.

As a result, a long-established clinic was suddenly forced to scramble for alternate space and retain patients while dealing with concerns about its ongoing viability, because a landlord decided it would be more profitable to pick the corporate tenant over the local one, and do it in a way that avoided having to buy out the lease.

As if individual local doctors did not have enough existential threats to deal with already.

The case is due for a hearing on April 12, 2023.

The author, Bharani Padmanabhan MD PhD, is a neurologist. scleroplex@gmail.com ◊

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Bill to Help Address Misuse of Over-the-Counter Medication

Pavel Payano
STATE SENATOR, 1ST ESSEX DISTRICT

This month, I would like to draw attention to a pressing issue regarding over-the-counter medication and introduce a bill that was filed this session to address it: S.1106, An Act specifying an electronic system to ensure that sales of certain products containing pseudoephedrine (PSE) do not exceed limits established under federal law.

In recent years, local law enforcement has raised concerns about the rise in 'homemade' methamphetamine production derived from relatively inexpensive medications, such as Sudafed, which contains Pseudoephedrine. These common ingredients in cold medications are readily available chemicals that can be utilized in the home production of methamphetamine. Not only do domestic labs pose a significant threat to public safety, but they also have detrimental effects on the environment, endangering vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly who live near these "meth labs."

To combat this issue, I introduced legislation that will set the limit on the sale of products containing pseudoephedrine or similar chemical bases. The bill requires pharmaceutical retailers to keep such products behind the counter or in a locked case and to log all purchases of these products each day. It also establishes additional safeguards to ensure compliance by mandating the submission of non-prescription buyers' information to the Department of Public Health or the appropriate state agency's sale system. The legislation's proposed measures mirror the limitations under federal law, which have been on the books for over a decade.

My office is working alongside local and statewide law enforcement agencies to educate the public about the issue and advocate to advance this critical legislation in the Legislature. With the rise in overdose deaths across the state and country, closing any loopholes that allow these products to fall into the wrong hands is critical.

Please let me know your thoughts on this bill or anything else.

You can reach my office at pavel.payano@masenate.gov or 617-722-1604. ◊

Homeless Volunteers Win Valley Patriot Scott Clegg Community Service Awards

A few years ago we lost a great friend and lifelong supporter of The Valley Patriot, Scott Clegg. Scott was a man who went out of his way to donate his time, money and resources to helping those less fortunate, as well as honoring veterans, and being active in the community.

When he passed, we named our Valley Patriot Goodwill Ambassador Award after Scott so that people will always remember the goodwill he brought to our community. The award is given out at our annual BASH.

This year we honored two local homeless advocates for their consistent dedication to feeding and servicing the homeless in Lawrence.

The first, Jill Stackelin of Methuen works full time for the city, ran the Methuen Santa Parade for 25 years and still finds time to help "The Movement Family" (TMF) run homeless dinners once a week.

The second, Susan Evans who has volunteered with Veterans Northeast Outreach and drives from Carlisle to Lawrence every Wednesday night to help TMF feed the homeless.

Both of these women have made personal sacrifices above and beyond their times.

Two tables of young inner city TMF volunteers packed the hall at the Relief's In in Lawrence to cheer on Jill Stackelin and Sue Evans, as well as TMF founder Michael Gorman who said that the help of Jill and Sue are so important to the mission of TMF.

"These individuals are always there when we need them. They give of their time and they work hard to help us reach out and service the needs of those on the streets, those who have given up hope. That's invaluable."

Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan said that Sue Evans and Jill Stackelin are the kind of people who don't want credit for what they do.

"They just want to make a difference. And in a world where everyone takes credit for everything, even the things they had nothing to do with, I try to find people for this award who are underappreciated because they don't toot their own horns. They deserve a lot of credit for what they do and I'm honored to be able to give them that credit." ◊

The Movement Family founder Michael Gorman puts his arm around Jill Stackelin as she looks at her award with Scott Clegg's widow Annie Clegg.

Serenity Rodriguez, one of the individuals helped by Jill Stackelin was on hand to congratulate her on her Goodwill Ambassador Award.

Marcos Devers Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Former Lawrence State Representative Marcos Devers was honored at The Valley Patriot's 19th Anniversary BASH last week, receiving The Valley Patriot's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"If Marcos was getting this award because he's my friend," publisher Tom Duggan said, "he would have gotten it long ago. Marcos gets this award tonight because he absolutely deserves it!"

"Marcos Devers is one of three people to ever get the Lifetime Achievement Award and I want to tell you why."

"Most people don't know this but Marcos Devers was the first Dominican born city councilor at large in the country. He was the first Dominican born mayor in the country. And he was the first Dominican born state representative in the country."

"Being Dominican, there was a lot of pressure throughout the years for him to tote the Democratic Party line. But, Marcos resisted that pressure and it cost him politically many times. He supports Voter ID and was taken off committees on Beacon Hill because he wouldn't call Voter ID racist."

"He was also the deciding vote in 2009 to save the job and reputation of former Licensing Commissioner Roger Twomey, when the mayor tried to fire Twomey for conducting an inspection on one of Willie Lantigua's donors."

Because of Marcos took a brave stand, Roger Twomey went on to be a City Councilor." Twomey's widow Marilyn came up to help Duggan present the award to Devers. ◊

Valley Patriot Gr. Lawrence Tech. Scholarship Recipient Arielle Cavarretta

This year's Greater Lawrence Tech Scholarship winner Arielle Cavarretta of Methuen received a check for $6,125 from Valley Patriot readers at our annual BASH.

Cavarretta was chosen for this scholarship by Methuen City Councilor Jessica Finocchiaro

Arielle Cavarretta is a 12th grade student in the Engineering program at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

Arielle has excelled academically throughout her high school career. She is currently ranked 5th in a class of 405 students and maintains a 4.3 / 4.0 GPA while taking honors level classes.

Outside of the classroom, Arielle is active and involved in the GLTS school community. She can be found most days after school at meetings for various clubs or volunteering at school events.

She is an editor of the yearbook, a member of the National Honor Society, co-president of her class and part of our 'Reggie Leader' group.

As a Reggie Leader, she mentors younger students and acts as an ambassador for our school at community events.

Arielle also volunteers to wrap Christmas gifts for children at St. Lucy Parish and plants flags on Memorial Day at St. Mary - Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Methuen. She is able to achieve outstanding grades, be involved at GLTS and volunteer in her community while also working a part time job.

Arielle plans to study animal science at UMass Amherst, UNH or University of Connecticut. Arielle lives in Methuen with her parents, Mark and Kelly Cavarretta.

On hand to present her check was Methuen State Representatives Ryan Hamilton, Estela Reyes, and Francisco Paulino, as well as councilors Jessica Finocchiaro, Eunice Zeigler, and Nick DiZoglio. Also present were Gr. Lawrence Tech School Committee Chair Francisco Surillo, Lawrence Councilor Stahanie Infante (who served on the Tech School Committee). Massachusetts State Auditor Diana DiZoglio presented Arielle with a citation as did representative Estela Reyes and State Senator Pavel Payano and former Councilor Ron Marsan.

Contributors to the scholarship are on page 21.

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A New Hobby? Just Do Your Job

Philippe Thibault
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNIST

I have had several people approach me over the past few years in Dracut to "pick my brain" prior to running for office. I am more than willing to sit down with anyone over a cup of coffee to engage on the topic of local government. Coffee is generally the main motivation, but government is a close second. One such person asked me "how do I win in Dracut?" I asked if that was a rhetorical question because I have never garnered that prize as a candidate. My interviewer did go to win against a longtime politician, astounding many people. My short response to the question was "the hell if I know." I still get called a politician by many, including family members. I refute the moniker. I am a better committeeman than a politician. Committeemen are those who do the work, politicians are those who take the credit. Dracut has far too many politicians, one sits as the Chair of the Board of Selectmen.

Alison Genest may be listed by Getty Images as a stock photograph for ribbon cuttings. This would be fine if her job were that of a media consultant, in public relations, or as an influencer. Honestly when did "influencer" become a profession? But if there is a ribbon to be cut, you know that Genest will be sauntering about the crowd making proclamations of the wonderful job she is doing. The town's finances are the best ever (thanks to CARES Act money of some nine million dollars) and new businesses are opening (after COVID 19 shut them all down). Maestro, please queue Lesley Gore's Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows. Now I am not dumping on the Town of Dracut. I will put it up against any other community as a beautiful place to live. As a lifelong resident, I continue to be active at all levels of community involvement. There are twenty-four hours in a day, and I like to fill them. My point is that it is the committeemen that have done more to make the community as wonderful as it is. The politicians are only there to collect glory. Try to get Genest to attend a meeting if she is not the chair of the committee. For that matter she has cancelled and postponed meetings that she could not attend in a desire to maintain her power. There are certain criteria that must be maintained, one of which is no heavy lifting and another of no sharing.

The persecutions of her husband's writings are another abhorrent feature of this political tag team. He labors over his writings for the demise of others. He has never learned the difference between critiquing and criticizing. The former being used for improvement and the latter for destruction. He may claim to be a First Amendment proponent, but it is his first amendment rights that concerns him, not yours. The governmental philosophy of this man is nothing more than that of a political contrarian. He is a Monday morning quarterback as he makes commentary on committeemen to score points for the politicians.

Teddy Roosevelt said it best in his "Man in the Arena" speech in 1910:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

Everyone should be recognized for the effort they put into life's arena. Some are more visible in their battles than others. I have always been more comfortable in the wings. I will start a new hobby of being more expressive. I wonder if the politicians will start doing their jobs. ◊

KANE'S KORNER

Sweet Paws Rescue Has Saved More Than 20,000 Animals

KANE
VALLEY PATRIOT MASCOT/COLUMNIST

Founder Cynthia Sweet (right) with Community Partners and Volunteers

March 27, 2023 is a perfect example of having boots on the ground saving three abandoned, actually dumped on the side of the road puppies. Kane wants you to take a close look at the picture below.

These three lovely volunteers from Sweet Paws Rescue, including founder Cynthia Sweet are holding three puppies who have escaped the grips of a certain death after being found dumped in a box. Kane says." Thank you ladies you are an inspiration to me and all dogs who were saved by a rescue or shelter." So let's dive in and learn more about Sweet Paws Rescue.

Kane, a rescue pup himself, had the pleasure of interviewing volunteer Laura Howes, and Marketing Manager Josie Daigle from the Sweet Paws Rescue. What caught Kane's eye is this rescue has saved more than 20,000 animals since Cynthia Sweet founded Sweet Paws rescue in 2011. Sweet Paws Rescue (SPR) is a registered non-profit animal rescue based in Massachusetts. They are a grassroots, boots-on-the-ground, shelterless, foster-based and volunteer-powered organization. (sweetpawsrescue.org)

Kane learned from Marketing Manager Josie Daigle that people were not the only ones struggling with the long term effects of COVID but animals have been suffering as well. In fact the hard reality is the combination of COVIDand inflation has created a sky-rocking number of animals being surrendered, abandoned , and an increase in cruelty and neglect cases. Sweet Paws Rescue is a trusted partner with several Animal Control Officers on the front line of identifying animals in need. SPR is mostly volunteer powered, which makes this 501C3 Non-Profit stand out from other rescues and shelters. In fact Sweet Paws Rescue has approximately 100 foster care homes and 400 volunteers. SPR welcomes additional volunteers, dog and cat supplies, and donations to pay for medical attention to meet the immediate needs of pets in the community, including lifesaving surgeries and treatments.

Josie explained to Kane that their dedicated volunteers have recently been walking dogs in their care several times each day, while waiting for a foster care match. These animals have often been emergency cases needing immediate safety and shelter. Laura Howes, dog walker and transport volunteer stated, "I take the pups for daily walks, and provide them with the attention and play time they desperately need. Without the volunteers these dogs would go without the basic care they deserve."

The high cost of pet care has created a dangerous precedence where dogs and cats are not being properly cared for. Animals are experiencing lack of medical care and malnourishment. This made Kane sad to hear about the number of homeless pets locally. To be honest this part of the country often prided itself on having a much lower homeless pet population than our southern communities, but things are rapidly changing. Laura Howes explained to Kane that she had driven a transport van to Virginia where she meets members of the southern team with a van full of dogs and cats on the way to Sweet Paws for a better life. The soon to be pet family members are transported to the isolation facility for 48 hours. Laura stated , "the dogs are next transferred to foster care or their forever home. Laura told Kane she loves to put the pets in the van and tell them, 'have a sweet life'."

Josie explained before COVID SPR was taking 5 to 15 local (MA) dogs a year and more recently, it has been 5 to 10 local (MA) dogs a week, in addition to our continued efforts in the south which recently totals 800 to 1,100 dogs a year. When Josie says providing services, she means life-saving medical attention, foster care, and much needed love and affection after these animals have experienced trauma and tragedy. Many animals would have lost their life without the immediate intervention of the rescue. Kane has much gratitude for the hard work of volunteers working in the rescue.

Kane asked Laura about her experience volunteering. Laura stated "It's been extremely rewarding volunteering with Sweet Paws. Ever since I was young, I have always had a deep love inside of me for animals. At Sweet Paws Rescue I am able to give this love to so many dogs who need it. They are so resilient, after everything they have been through and this makes me smile. I am making a huge impact helping save these dogs' lives. I have also loved meeting like-minded people at Sweet Paws and have made so many new friends. We bond over our love for animals and this is something I cherish and look forward to every day!"

This type of important work cannot be achieved without the dedication of loyal volunteers. Please, for the love of animals without voices, donate, volunteer, or foster. Grass root organizations like Sweet Paws Rescue saves lives one animal at a time. To donate or get involved contact http://www.sweetpawsrescue.org/contact

Thank you Sweet Paws Rescue, we see you and love what you are doing!

Kane Peaslee, Woof
Columnist, Valley Patriot◊

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Valley Patriot Readers Contribute $10,000 for Scholarship in Memory of Dan Coady

Four years ago, one of our readers, Al Veilleux donated $500 to start a scholarship in memory of Dan Coady Jr. who was killed in tragic accident on Rt. 495 just a week before our annual BASH in 2018.

Each year Al asks that we keep the Dan Coady Memorial Scholarship going for students who attended the Thomson Grammar School in North Andover where at least one of Dan Coady's children attended at the time of his death.

Al's goal was to keep this scholarship going every year in the hopes that Dan's children would be able to receive this scholarship when they graduate from High School. Last year Dan's oldest son Patrick received this scholarship in the amount of $7,390.

That was the highest amount ever given out at the Valley Patriot BASH!

That is, until this year when we raised $10,000 for this scholarship.

Members of the Coady family were in attendance to help present the check to Cam Reiland who was chosen for this scholarship by our friend North Andover School Committeeman Andrew McDevitt.

There was also another surprise this year as North Andover Superintendent Gregg Gilligan joined us to congratulate Reiland and help us do the check presentation.

CAM REILAND

Camden Reiland is a proud graduate of The Thomson School. He has many amazing memories from attending 6 years at the historic North Andover elementary school. Some of them include early morning chess club with many of his neighborhood friends, hours of playing sports at the Kids Stop after school program and many great teachers and administrators mentoring him. Camden's favorite memories are the Veterans Day celebrations where once he was chosen to speak and honor our countries heroes.

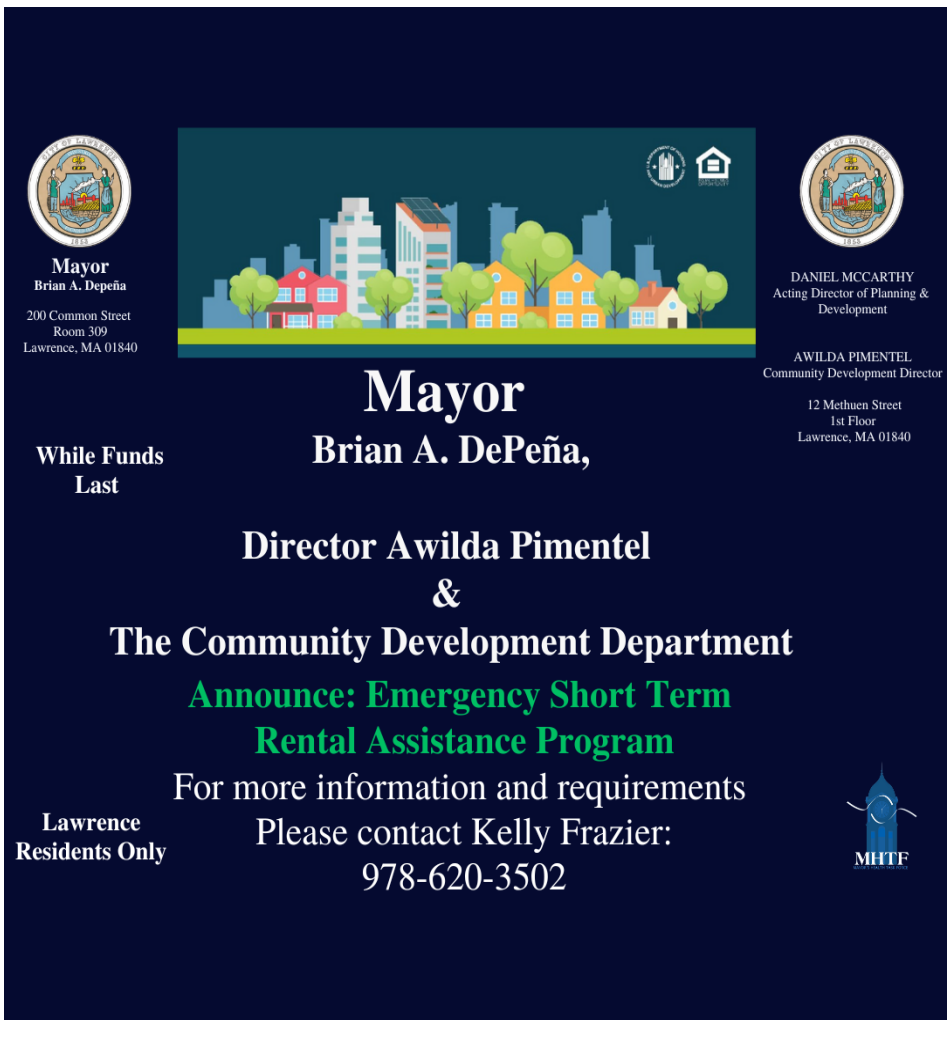
A senior at North Andover High School, Camden has used the lessons learned at The Thomson School to blaze a bright path. He was a 3-year varsity starter and senior captain of the soccer team. During his senior year he was awarded the MVP award. He was also named to the Merrimack Conference First-Team in addition to playing in the Eastern Massachusetts All-Star Game.

Camden is a two time All American in Track and field. He is a 4-year varsity runner and currently captain of both the indoor and outdoor track teams. During his track career he has been a part of 6 team state championships, multiple Merrimack Valley individual championships and top 6 finish in the mile at the all state championships. He currently holds the North Andover High School record in the indoor 2 mile, 4X800 meter relay, 4Xmile relay, and the Distance medley relay.

Academically Camden has excelled as well. He is a member of the National Honor Society with a 4.425 GPA. Camden was selected to receive the Abigail Adams Scholarship for high academic performance on the high school MCAS exams. His hard work academically has earned him a spot at many colleges and universities. He has yet to decide where he will attend.

Camden has volunteered for many things around the community. He has spent time helping at the elementary schools, including Thomson, demonstrating chemistry experiments with his AP classmates. He has also traveled around town to mentor elementary and middle school students as captain of his sports teams. He is proud to live and represent North Andover.

We have listed the donors for this scholarship on page 20. ◊



BASH Attendees Stun Lawrence High Student with $10,600 for College

In 2010 we started the Lawrence High Scholarship at our annual BASH and gave $100 to graduating senior Devante Jones. But in 2018, 84 year old Korean War vet Eugene Smith approached us with a $1,400 check asking if we could repurpose the scholarship for a member of the Lawrence High JrROTC. Of course, we accepted and designated this scholarship for a student going into the military.

This year, as we put out the call for donations on Facebook for this scholarship it looked as though our scholarship recipient Jaraliz Morales was going to be the highest scholarship amount ever, but the Coady supporters kept having their own fundraisers to make the Coady Scholarship the highest amount among all our scholarship winners this year.

Coming into the room on the night of the BASH, the Coady scholarship winner Cam Reiland had reached $10,000 in donations, while the total for Jaraliz Morales was at $9,465.

As we were presenting the giant check, Lawrence City Councilor Rich Russell handed us $35 to make Jaraliz's total an even $9,500. What happened next stunned the crowd. Eric Melanson who had just been elected president of the Lawrence High Alumni Association took the microphone away from Tom Duggan and announced that as the new president he was committing another $500 to this scholarship bringing the total to an even $10,000, tying Cam Reiland for the largest scholarship total in BASH history.

As Jaraliz and the Lawrence High supporters were celebrating, someone else took the microphone. "Hold on Tommy," said Randy Carter from the John Ratka Memorial Scholarship (who had already donated $1,500 for this recipient). "The John Ratka Memorial Scholarship can't let this be a tie, so we are going to donate another $500 for Jaraliz to help her pay for college with a total of $10,500!"

Randy Carter is from Clear Path for Veterans New England and a previous John Ratka hero veterans award winner.

The hall erupted and Jaraliz's parents celebrated forcing Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan to change the amount on the giant check to reflect the new donations (see right).

On hand to present the check for Jaraliz were State Auditor Diana DiZoglio, State Representatives Estela Reyes and Francisco Paulino, Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena, School Committee members Pat Mariano, Santiago Cruz, and Jonathan Guzman, as well as city councilors Marc Laplante, Celina Reyes, Rich Russell, Jeovanny Rodriguez, Stephanie Infante, and State Senator Pavel Payano.

Jaraliz "Jada" Morales is a senior at Lawrence High School who achieved the rank of Cadet LTC and is currently serving as the Battalion Commander of the Lancer Battalion.

Jada attends Lawrence Abbott Academy. She has a unique leadership style and is respected by all members of the battalion. Cadet LTC Morales is strict yet approachable. She brought the unarmed drill team to victory this drill season winning 2 out of 3 competitions. This cadet is also part of the Lancer battalion step team and has performed for the last several years all over the Merrimack Valley. We are certain that she will be successful in anything she sets her mind to.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS: 2010-Davante Jones, Franklin Pierce University| 2011-Crismelys Ruiz, Lincoln Tech. Lowell - Med Asst.| 2012-Ambar Hussein-Martinez, Northern Essex| 2013-Thalia Garcia, Westfield State University: 2014 Sofia Cardenas and Ramses Jiminez Candelario | 2015 winners Christopher Pichardo & Caroline Garcia | 2016 winners Kevin Vanderhorst & Thu Dang. | 2017 Winners Christian Lantigua and Leslie Morerro, | 2018 Darlene Santos | 2019 Rachel Hiraldo | 2020 Camilla Herrera | 2021 COVID Hysteria | 2022 Katerin Ucles ◊

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Addressing the Nursing Shortage in MA

Francisco Paulino
STATE REP., LAWRENCE/METHUEN

As a state representative, one of my top priorities is addressing the nurse shortage in Massachusetts.

This shortage not only has serious implications for the health and well-being of our residents, but it also puts a significant strain on healthcare costs in our state. That's why I am committed to working with my colleagues in the legislature and Governor Healy's team to find solutions to this critical issue.

I am pleased to report that the Governor has committed significant resources to promoting nurse training in our state. The 10 million program would "support nursing facilities and home- and community-based services providers in their efforts to retain direct care staff and upskill them to LPNs. The program would fund no-interest loans and grants to support the cost of attending an LPN certification program, as well as living expenses while attending."

While I fully support the Governor's initiative on the supplemental budget, I remain concerned about the millions of Massachusetts residents who could lose insurance coverage due to the requirement of income recertification. We must work to mitigate the impact of lapse in coverage and ensure that all residents in our state have access to affordable, quality healthcare.

As a state representative, I am deeply committed to ensuring that all residents in the Merrimack Valley have access to the tools and resources they need to succeed. That's why I believe that early childhood education is so critical to the future of each child in our region. Studies have shown that children who receive quality early childhood education are more likely to succeed in school and in life. That's why I believe that making early childhood education accessible for all families in our community must be a priority.

Access to quality early childhood education is not only important for the development of each child, but it also has significant benefits for our society as a whole. By investing in early childhood education, we are investing in our future workforce, our economy, and our communities. That's why I will continue to work with my colleagues in the legislature to ensure that all families in the Merrimack Valley have access to high-quality early childhood education programs.

We have a responsibility to invest in the future of our community, and that means investing in our children. By prioritizing early childhood education, we can help ensure that every child in the Merrimack Valley has the opportunity to reach their full potential. I am committed to working tirelessly to make this a reality for all families in our community. ◊

BASH Attendees Present Surprise Scholarship for Cheylynn Marmol

With seven students on our Valley Patriot BASH! scholarship program, our Greater Lawrence Tech. scholarship recipient Arielle Cavarretta had already been chosen when Cheylynn Marmol submitted her scholarship application late.

Since her mother, Jackie Marmol has been so incredibly helpful getting us donations for our BASH every year it was hard to say no when she asked if we could somehow find a way to raise money for her daughter.

While we did not publicize this scholarship as part of our program, after giving out our Gr. Lawrence Tech scholarship to Arielle Cavarretta we called up Jackie Marmol and her daughter Cheylynn and presented her with a check for $2,300 raised from making calls to local officials.

Cheylynn said she was shocked to receive the scholarship, saying she thought she was out of luck when she submitted her scholarship late.

Pictured above are; Lawrence City Councilor Stephanie Infante, Francisco Surillo, chairman of the Gr. Lawrence Tech School Committee, State Representatives Estela Reyes and Francisco Paulino, Massachusetts State Auditor Diana DiZoglio, and State Senator Pavel Payano.

Also on hand was Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena (not pictured).◊

GENEST: FROM PAGE 4

Nothing silences the critics like success, however. And the sound of silence in this year's election speaks volumes about how well things are going in Dracut right now.

The reality is that our success is due to the leadership of Town Manager Ann Vandal, her staff of department heads and all the town employees. Our success is due to clear direction from the decisive majority on the Board of Selectmen. Our success is due to strong support from the townspeople. Seeing our town be successful, thanks to strong leadership, is something we should all be able to celebrate.

Our town has come a long way in a short time, thankfully. We must keep moving forward in a positive, professional, and proactive way. We must continue to reject the Dracut haters and the politics of the past. We must keep the positive momentum.

—Brian Genest is the producer and host of Eye On Dracut, winner of the Hometown Media Award for News, sponsored by Lucky Oil. ◊

Methuen Officers Schiavone and Keating Receive Officer Tom Duggan Hero Police Award

Each year the Valley Patriot gives out an Officer Tom Duggan, Sr. Hero Police Officer Award in honor of the former Lawrence Police Officer who was murdered in the line of duty in 1990. This year

Methuen Sgt. Eric Deleon nominated Officers Schiavone and Keating to be recognized for their bravery, courage, and ability to perform their duties under an extremely stressful situation.

On July 23, 2023, Officers Kevin Schiavone and James Keating were working a detail at the Elixer Hookah Lounge on East Street in Methuen. While officers were in the area, a shooting occurred with 6-7 shots being fired. Simultaneously, a large fight broke out during closing time while officers were present within feet of the incident. The subjects had no regard for the police officer's presence.

The scene was chaotic. Approximately 100 people in the Elixir parking lot were agitated and angry, gridlocking the parking lot quickly. The crowd was yelling, honking horns, and revving their car engines. Officers from Andover, Haverhill, MSP, Medford, Newbury, Lowell, Dracut, and Salem (NH) assisted. One male was shot in the leg above the knee. He was attempting to conceal his injury and involvement and left the scene. Police were looking for a Mercedes believed to be involved in the shooting. Then police observed a 2021 Mercedes parked with tinted windows and fearing for their safety ordered the occupants out at gunpoint. Officers located a female attempting to hide a gun within the backseat of the vehicle. All four occupants of the vehicle were subsequently arrested.

Sgt. Deleon, as the Commanding Officer, felt that the officers on scene were in imminent harm. Numerous outside agencies were contacted and responded to assist during this very dangerous incident. As a result of a complete and thorough investigation by Officers Schiavone and Officer Keating, two firearms were recovered, and several arrests were made. One male was treated for a gunshot wound. These two officers showed courage and the ability to work through a very stressful situation involving an unruly crowd of more than 100 people. These two officers remained composed and focused. Doing so kept others safe on scene. The officers secured a dangerous crime scene, rendered first aid and conducted a thorough investigation. Sgt Deleon requested that these two Officers be recognized for their brave efforts. ◊

Methuen Police Officers James Keating, Deputy Chief Haggar and Officer Kevin Schiavone with Methuen School Committee member Jana Zanni Pesce and Lisa Williams of AFC Urgent Care.

Ret. Lawrence Firefighter Mike Delaney Receives Officer Tom Duggan Hero Firefighter Award

Retired Lawrence Firefighter Mike Delaney Sr. thought he was coming to the Valley Patriot's BASH to surprise his son with an Officer Tom Duggan Hero Public Safety Award. But the surprise was on him when it was announced that he had been tricked. "I know you think you are here to surprise your son with this award, but actually he is here to give the award to you."

Michael J. Delaney comes from a long line of professional firefighters.

His grandfather, Michael Delaney, was a deputy for the Chelsea Fire Department. His father, James Delaney was a lieutenant for the Boston Fire Department. His younger brother, Patrick Delaney, is currently a captain for Lawrence Fire Department and his son, Michael H. Delaney is also a Lawrence firefighter. Michael's long line of fire service extends to seventeen family members serving or have served across the Commonwealth from 1924 to present day.

Michael J. Delaney was appointed to the Lawrence Fire Department on April 26, 1987. He spent most of his time in South Lawrence at Ladder 9, Engine 9, and Ladder 4. Throughout his career, he served the citizens of Lawrence as a front-line firefighter. From the start of his career, Lawrence was known as the "Arson Capital of the World". Apart from the many fires, Michael fought throughout his career, some notable moments of his bravery are:

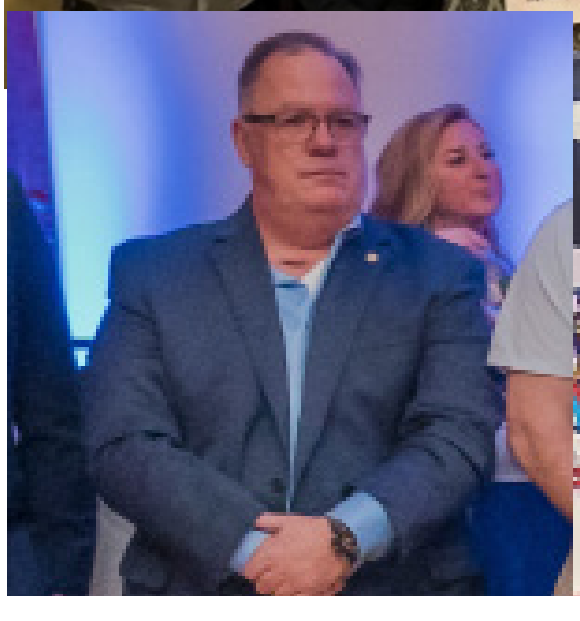
- In 1994, Michael worked through the Malden Mills fire .
- 3/13/95 Commendation for medical assist on Crosby St.
- 4/25/97 Commendation for rescue on the Merrimack River of a boat going over the falls
- 2/21/00 Commendation for actions at 441 South Broadway where he was coming back from a call, noticed a fire in progress and rescued tenants from the building
- 1/21/08 Was 1st on scene during the conflagration at Parker and Springfield St.
- Rescued a dog out of the Merrimack River
- Retired on April 29, 2016
- In retirement, during December 2017, alongside three other Lawrence Firefighters, he administered CPR and saved Brian Boutin, the son of Retired Captain Leo Boutin.

Michael worked at a time before social media, where every heroic action wasn't documented. Dingy, as he is known to friends, was truly a leader by example for every firefighter who worked with him. He did the job the way it should have been done. When the bell hits, you'd rather nobody else on the line with you going in to help someone in need. His bravery and knowledge are second to none. His legendary status as an athletic legend throughout the Merrimack Valley was equally matched by his status as a Lawrence firefighter for his career. The memories and the laughs shared by him and the men and women he worked with were the stuff of legends as well. Michael was a strong labor employee and faithfully served under Lawrence Firefighters Union Local 146, answering the call time and time again.

Michael worked his entire career serving the citizens of Lawrence as what fellow firefighters call "a Good Jake." This term is considered the highest form of praise that firefighters can give to each other. ◊

The Valley Patriot's 19th Anniversary BASH!

The Valley Patriot's 19th Anniversary BASH!



Valley Patriot BASH Partners with Franz Acres Association to Honor Edmund Lo with Surprise Scholarship Donation

Every year the Lo family of Salem, N.H. (owners of Jasmine Computer Service) attend our annual BASH and sit at the coveted Gold Star Family table as our honored guests after their family member, Army Staff Sgt. Edmond L. Lo died on June 13, 2009 in Samarra City, Iraq, serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was 23 years old and assigned to the 797th Ordnance Company, 79th Ordnance Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas.

This year, the Valley Patriot partnered with Carrie Clark Weiland of the Franz Acres Association to surprise the Los with a donation to the Edmund Lo Scholarship fund for students graduating from Salem, N.H. High School.

Upon presenting the check to Mr. Lo, the Lawrence High JrROTC marched to the front of the room and saluted the gold star father, as Carrie Weiland and former Massachusetts Secretary of Veterans Services Francisco Urena (a Purple Heart Marine) looked on.

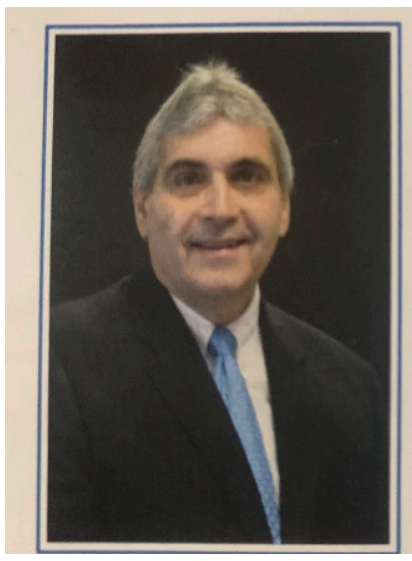
Edmund Lo was killed when an improvised explosive device that his explosive ordnance disposal team was acting to neutralize detonated.

Lo was offered a full scholarship to a prominent engineering school in his senior year, but turned it down, choosing instead to disarm bombs for the Army.

It was a job intended to save lives, but one that cost Lo his. The 23-year-old staff sergeant was six months into his second tour of duty in Iraq when a roadside bomb he was working on exploded June 13th in Samarra City, his family said.

Lo graduated from Salem High School in 2004, where he was a member of the Air Force Junior ROTC program. He was commander of the drill team, color guard and operations squadron.

Edmund Lo was the youngest of six children born to parents who emigrated from Hong Kong, became U.S. citizens and started a family. They run Jasmine computer repair service in Salem, N.H..



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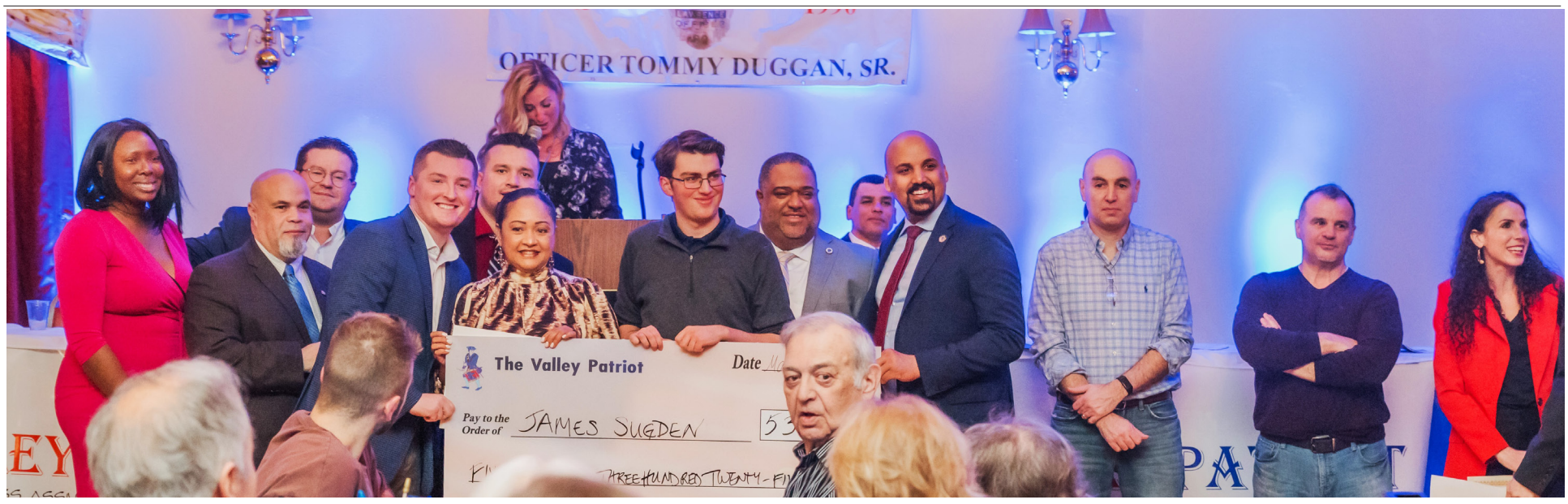

Studio 21 Podcast Cafe Scholarship Recipient Methuen High School's James Sugden

This scholarship at our annual BASH was started last year by Dave Garofalo of the Studio 21 Podcast Cafe in Salem, N.H. for a student going into media or communications.

Because we did not have a Methuen High School student on our scholarship program Tom Duggan got permission from Dave to designate this scholarship for a student graduating from Methuen High.

Bash Committee member Jana DiNatale researched and chose James Sugden of Methuen as this year's recipient.

James Sugden's favorite classes are history and film/video production. Both sparked his interest and he is eager to pursue a degree in History and Film in college. James is very involved with the music program. He is in Honors Band, Marching Band, Jazz Band, Dirty Hands Ink, and he also plays in the school's theater productions. These commitments certainly take up a lot of time after school, including multiple hours of practice. He volunteered at a local grammar school for their fall festival, and he has assisted with unified track. He is a member of the National Honor and History Honor Societies as well. Moreover, he works for the school's video production crew, and films the school committee meetings, which is a job he has had since last year. This year, James did a Christmas Special involving teachers for his video production class and it was fabulous!

On hand to present the giant check to James were, (Pictured above) Methuen City Council Chairman Eunice Zeigler, Methuen resident and Chairman of the Gr. Lawrence Tech School Committee Francisco Surillo, Councilor Nick DiZoglio, State Rep. Ryan Hamilton, Methuen School Committee members Jana Zanni Pesce (background) and Ryan DiZoglio, State Rep. Estela Reyes and Francisco Paulino, State Senator Pavel Payano, Dave DiNatale, Joe Zingales from Zingales Realty who donated to this scholarship and Massachusetts State Auditor Diana DiZoglio who also presented a citation to James for his accomplishment.

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Haverhill High, Whittier Tech Scholarship Winners

THE MICHELLE DELUCA BENEDETTI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP was established by her brother Ken DeLuca with a $500 donation to a Haverhill High School Senior going into Criminal Justice or Social Work in the fall.

Michelle (DeLuca) Benedetti, 51, wife of Joseph A. Benedetti, passed away May 30, 2019 at High Pointe Hospice in Haverhill after a courageous battle with cancer. Her long fight didn't define her, however, nor did it slow her down. She made every moment count, right up to the last. She was surrounded by her loving family. Michelle obtained her master's degree from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. For 21 years she was employed with the State of Massachusetts in the Department of Children and Families as a Social Worker and Supervisor, working in the Haverhill Office since 2001.

This year's scholarship recipient is Liam Robertson who received $5,335 from our scholarship drive.

Liam is a current senior at Haverhill High School. He is a three-season athlete at HHS, participates in fall crew, winter track (captain), and spring track. His extracurricular activities include Foreign Language National Honor Society and National Honor Society.

Liam plans to pursue a career in Criminal Justice and attend Merrimack in the fall of 2023.

WHITTIER TECH SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ARTURO ZUNIGA

This scholarship was started by Al Veilleux five years ago with a donation of $500 for a Whittier Tech. graduate. Veilleux is a Whittier Alum.

This year we were able to raise $5,410 for our recipient Arturo Zuniga,

Arturo is a senior in the masonry program at Whittier Tech.

An extremely hard worker, Arturo has been proven his solid work ethic, maturity, and responsibility in his shop, his academic classes on the athletic fields, and in his co-op job. Hailing from Haverhill, Arturo was captain of the varsity soccer team, is a valued member of the Whittier maintenance crew through his co-op job, and works another part-time job outside of school hours. He was described by his teachers as a quiet leader who will tackle any job project or assignment given to him without a single word of complaint.

After graduating from Whittier he has aspirations of studying construction management at Fitchburg State College or Wentworth Institute of Technology. ◊

Arturo Zuniga (left) from Whittier Tech received $5,410 for his college education thanks to our Valley Patriot readers who donated to this scholarship that was started by Al Veilleux who is a Whittier Alum.

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Two Haverhill Students get Scholarship at Annual BASH

Whittier Tech. Scholarship winner Arturo Zuniga shakes hands with Haverhill City Councilor Joe Bevelacqua as Al Veilleux (left) and Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan. At right, Tom Delacey and Lisa Williams from AFC Urgent Care with scholarship recipient Liam Robertson (wearing a tie) with Ken DeLuca, brother of Michelle DeLuca Benedetti and former State Rep. Lenny Mirra.

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WHITTIER TECH SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT ARTURO ZUNIGA

Jen Ragiala, Al Veilleux, Robin Parsons, Atty Paul Lambert, Jay Gees Ice Cream, Christina Lynn, Alison Niang, Steve Spaulding, Laborer's Union Local 175, Dee O'Neil, Allison Saffie, 50/50 money from bingo night, Joey Viel, Paul Moskevitz, Steve Spaulding, Maureen Lynch, Colleen Coughlan, Tara Krch, Sheila Arias, Al and Janet Veilleux, Sheriff Kevin Coppinger, Al Veilleux, Ryan Hamilton, Lenny Mirra, AFC Urgent Care.

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Francisco Paulino, Mayor Brian DePena, Estela Reyes.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO DONATED THEIR SERVICES TO THE BASH!

The Valley Patriot BASH committee would like to thank all of those who donated their services so that we could keep our costs down and give 100% of every donation to our scholarship kids. Thank you to:

* Salvatore's Restaurant in Lawrence for donating the dinner.
* The Firefighters at the Relief's In for donating the hall.
* DJ Rick Bellanti from Belle Air Music for donating his DJ services.
* Bob Wescott from Copilabs for donating the programs for the night.
* Photographers Angel Garcia and Rich Russell.
* Lawrence Cable Access for videotaping and broadcasting the BASH.
* Henry's Jewelry and Awards in Lawrence for donating the awards.
* Our BASH emcee Jana Zanni Pesce.

BASH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Thank you as well to our BASH Committee who volunteered hundreds of hours to plan and set up the event. They are:

Maria Fiato, Nancy Gorman, Denise Donlan, Jessica Finocchiaro, Kevin Drouin, Brenda Rozzi, Jill Stackelin, Bob Murdock, Eric Melanson, Rick Bellanti, Sonia Kwon, Jana Zanni Pesce, Sharon and Barry Booker, Stephanie Maniatakos, and Michael Gorman.◊

TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

The volunteers from The Movement Famly (TMF) who feed the homeless in Lawrence were on hand to support the Valley Patriot and cheer on Sue Evans and Jill Stackelin, who received the Scott Clegg Community Service Award.

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Teens, adults and retirees welcome (volunteers must be at least 15 1/2 years old). Experience and horse knowledge is a plus, but not required. Are you a student with a community service requirement (Honor Society, Scouts, 4-H, Graduation, etc.)? If so, we would love to hear from you!

Anyone interested in learning more can contact The Carriage Barn at 603-378-0140, email info.carriagebarn@comcast.net or thebarn@comcast.net. Please check out our website at www.carriage-barn.org. We are located at 10 Trundlebed Lane, Kensington, NH 03833.

The program offers services in Kensington, NH and seeks to promote the health and well-being of individuals of all ages with disabilities by enhancing their physical, psychological, cognitive and emotional healing and strengthening through equine activities. The Carriage Barn is a 501c3 Not-for-Profit Organization, as well as a member center of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International.

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Weather 101 with Al Kaprielian

The First Full Month of Spring

Welcome to April and the first full month of the spring season.

Being in between winter and summer April can still have some large temperature swings. Also with the contrast of some remaining chilly air across Canada and much warmer air across the southern United States April can bring stormy weather due to low pressure. Even though it is now April it can still snow during the month. For example, we had two snowstorms in April of 1997.

The first snowstorm occurred on April 1st and a second snowstorm occurred a week later. Due to it being April and the lack of arctic air the snow from these two snowstorms was heavy and wet with a high density. Due to the weight of the snow it built up on trees and power lines causing them to fall.

This resulted in widespread power outages. With the higher sun angle in April, the snow melted fairly quickly. So if we see any snow during April in the future it melts as fast as it came. April can also bring heavy rain with any storm that brings heavy rain.

Even though the daily high temperatures increase as we go through the month temperatures at night can still drop below freezing (32) degrees. It is still not safe from the cold to plant flowers outside or make a garden during April. After Memorial Day it is pretty much safe from the cold and you can plant your flowers and make your garden at this time. Recapping March temperatures still ran a few degrees above normal for the month. There were some cold days during the month. Our first Nor'easter of the season occurred on Tuesday March 14th. Areas along and near the coast from Boston and points south got mostly cold rain. This included Cape Cod & the Islands. Due to the time of year the higher elevations got the higher snow amounts. The higher elevations and Berkshires saw as much as three feet of snow and there were also a few higher amounts. The higher elevations of New Hampshire also got a few feet of snow with Peterborough, New Hampshire getting 35" of snow.

Being March, the snow was heavy and wet which resulted in numerous power outages in MA and NH. Power crews from other states were called in to help with the power restoration. Even lower elevations of southern and central NH got over 6 inches of heavy wet snow.

With the sun angle higher in March, the snow started to melt faster compared to December and January. The air over New England was not that cold before this Nor'easter arrived. Due to the intense nature of the Nor'easter, it made its own cold air to produce a heavy wet snow to the areas I mentioned above.

Recapping this past winter, December, January and February we did not get any prolonged arctic air. We had a brief period of arctic air at Christmas time and then again on February 3rd & 4th. In both of these time periods the arctic air did not last long, it was quite brief. The reason for this was the jet stream retreated back north into Canada putting us on the south side (warmer side) of the jet stream. With this pattern of the jet stream the winter overall was warmer than normal. During December, January and February we had days when high temperatures reached into the 50s and even some 60s.

Normally in the winter months a winter coat is needed daily. However with the warm days which occurred this winter some people wore shorts and tee shirts. In years going way back during the winter months it was unusual to wear shorts and tee shirts in December, January and February. Getting back to the present time now that it is April and with the warmer temperatures the trees will start to bloom as we go through the month. As more trees start to bloom the tree pollen will start to increase in the coming weeks. Also during this time of year if a lack of rainfall occurs along with dry ground (soils) along with windy conditions this can lead to elevated fire potential. If these conditions increase in a given day a red flag warning will be issued for your area. This means any wildfires or burning of brush outside your home can rapidly spread due to the dry ground and windy conditions. Under these conditions there should be no outside burning. If you do any outside burning at your home make sure you or another person is there to monitor the fire! Now is the time to plan your garden or flower bed. Will April bring any real warm weather 70s or even 80s?? Will we see any more cold and snow this April?

Will there be any heavy rainstorms? Stay tuned to next month's article for these answers.

In the meantime enjoy the spring season and the longer hours of daylight! ◊

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Property Sales, Foreclosures for MARCH., 2023 in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover. (All properties are listed in order; seller, buyer, price, address.)

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ANDOVER

Bernard N Driscoll III, Dustin Tyner, $2,325,000, 14 Woburn St

Yvon Comier Tr & CA Investment Trust , Joseph V & Cheryl A Leone Trs & JVL & Cal Realty Trust , $1,450,000, 21 Robert Dr Unit 5-3

Martin T Manning Jr & Marissa A Manning , Michael J & Christa L Dalelio, $1,425,000, 5 Devonshire Pl

John San Cartier, Sellers Farm Estates LLC, $1,250,000, 3,4,5,6,7, Sellers Farm Rd

Benjamin & Judith V Volinski, Jordan Bernt Martin & Lauren Kim Martin, $1,187,000, 1 Radcliff Dr

Jack E & Lorraine E Luber Trs & Luber Realty Trust , Shrinivas Krishna Muri & Radha Naik-Murti, $1,135,000, 8 Island Way

Charles J & Jane C DiPerri, Joseph G Chartier, $1,025,000, 22 Bobby Jones Dr Unit 4-2

Joseph Chartier, Seydyss O Barreto, $875,000, 2 Boardwalk Dr Unit 2

Kathleen Law & Carolyn Conroy Tr & Wilbur T Hooven IV Tr & Carolyn Conroy Trust, Robert & Carolyn Boudreau, $850,000, 82 Holt Rd

Paul D Grearson & Diane L Crabtree, Peimei Li, $820,000, 2 Sweetbriar Ln

Bank of New York Mellon, Philip W & Cathleen H Summers Tr & KMC Realty Trust , $687,855, 43 High St

Mihaela Templer/Mihaela Constanta Templer & Eduard Cristian Templer, Lucas Townsend & Michelly Santos, $570,000, 90 Poor St

Danielle & Daniel Jamieson, Matthew E McGovern, $500,000, 57 ElmSt

Jean V Fitzpatrick & Mary S Ricciardone Est, Kristen Aulbach, $415,000, 7 Bryan Ln Unit 12

Pulte Homes of New England LLC, Marianne Fabbri & Michael A Fazio, $399,995, 6 Overlook Dr Unit 207

Ronald D Wiltshire Jr, Hranush Ter Grigoryan, $385,000, 16 Balmoral St Unit 102

Bettencourt Capital LLC, Jose F Perez-Martinez & Elsa Alago Hernandez, $367,000, 40C Washington Park Dr Unit 10

Joseph P Fish, Nicole Haung & Wan Xi Ye, $323,000, 1 Longwood Dr Unit 109

LAWRENCE

Keith & Anne Lefebvre, Bruce L Belbin & Llyod Belbin & Shirley Belbin, $270,000, 237 North Main St Unit 6

Nunez LLC, Park & Wells LLC, $1,800,000, 13 Wells St, 354-358 Park St

Nassif A & Hani A Ata, Depena LLC, $1,200,000, 291-299 Broadway

Thomas Tan & Chon Thi Dang & Chon Thi Lo Tr & Tan-Chau Realty Trust, ERA Real Estate LLC, $1,100,000, 264-280 South Union St

DCD Group LLC, Nanuski LLC, $1,060,000, 187-189 Essex St

Nunez LLC, Lamek Group LLC, $850,000, 79 Common St

Alder Street LLC, RSL Investments Corp, $800,000, 115 Alder St, 117 Willow St

Patrice M Murray & Wash H Felings, Carl Dhaiti, $760,000, 2 Conduit St

Kathleen Laughlin Tr & William J Loughlin Jr Irrevocable Trust, Eddy A Cruz, $760,000, 69-71 Shawsheen Rd

Frandy Villa, Oscar Milan Mahecha Diaz, $710,000, 53-55 Brook St

Abel F Jordan Reyes & Mildred Perez, Rosa E Olmo Matos Decontre & Alejandro M Contreras, $685,000, 72 Bryon Ave

41-43 Chelmsford St LLC, Pedro Soto & Candida Pinales & Bresniel Soto Pinales, $675,000, 41 Chelmsford St

41-43 Chelmsford St LLC, Kelvin Herrera Amaro & Evangelista Vicente Paulino, $660,000, 43 Chelmsford St

Pedro & Alejandrina Velazquez, Maria Burgos, $650,000, 64 Bennington St

Que Thi La , Francisco Guillen & Lucedenia Gil, $630,000, 140-142 Farnham St

Jose Luis Vargas & Eva Teresa Ramos De Vargas, Jermy Salazar & Henry Salazar, $615,000, 218 Water St

Thomas J Couture Jr, Katherine N Garcia & Maria E Gonzales Disla , $610,000, 523-525 Lowell St

Prime Real Estate Investment LLC, Jose M Marine, $600,000, 540 Essex St

Mary M Aluda, Juan Guzman & Sobeida Checo & Sodeli Guzman Checo, $550,000, 40-42 Tewksbury St

Timothy A Frazier Tr & Fraziers General Trust, Visal Chhim, $545,000, 117 Chester St Unit A & B

Arielle S Howe & Joseph S Boren Est, Arielys Perez, $500,000, 49-51 Basswood St

JMF Realty LLC, Naomi M Cabrera & Marybeth R Cabrera, $482,000, 21 Ames St

Rafael Danilo Geronimo & Jennifer Geronimo/Jennifer Maria, Jose Cabrera & Sandra Castillo de Cabrera, $479,000, 14 Warren St

Martel C LLC, Vanessa Santiago, $467,000, 67 Ferry St

Arthur R Gervais, Patrick Oleskey & Tammy Robinson, $458,000, 5 Nesmith St

Twenty Border Street LLC, Joseph PaPa, $449,900, 20 Border St Unit 20

Empire Investments LLC, Olivia Portegello & Michael Bacherman, $435,000, 29 Beaconsfield St

Donna Jean Robershefski , Yvelyne Alrichie & Aloni Cosey, $430,000, 87 Genesse St

Mohamad Yamin/Mohammad Yamin, Kadeisha Mejias & Karina Frias, $405,000, 1100 Essex St

Carmen M Rodriguez & Virginia Aviles Est , Stephanie M Rivera & Wilson Martinez Jr, $400,000, 22 Hallenan Ave

Ann S Kozodoy & David E Kozodoy Est/David Edward Kozodoy Est, Phelo Realty LLC, $360,000, 85 Exeter St

Chloe LLC, Long Term Rentals LLC, $340,000, 144-146 Water St

Rudleney/Rudleny Abreu, William Hugh Foster & Tamiah Carol Foster, $235,000, 312 Water St Unit 29

Maria Yameen & Maria M Mendez, Batista Handyman LLC, $184,000, 6B Lincoln Ct Unit D

Arthur R Gervais & Karen E Gervais/ Karen Deshaies, Merrimack Valley Real Estate Solutions LLC, $115,000, 0 Nesmith St

Maximo Cabrera, Eversource Gas Co of Massachusetts, $35,000, 189-191 Prospect St

METHUEN

Steven K Feinberg, Suguna & Mohan Chunduri, $895,000, 31 Fairways Ln

Toll MA Land III LP, Brian M & Lisa N Bowler, $867,108, 17 Cardinal Rd Unit 173

Joseph W & Gayle M Fili Tr & Fili Family Nominee Trust, Sarmistha Chaudhuri Tr & Sarmistha Chaudhuri Trust, $860,000, 59 Phobee St Unit 34

Michael Joel Urena & Jennifer Mariel Diaz Tavarez, Nicholas Rignoli & Christine O'Brien, $790,000, 2 Kimball Cir

Luis Arias, Junot & Kris W Saint Claude, $776,000, 1-1A May Ct

Toll Ma Land III LP , Kevin M & Barbara J French Trs & French Family Trust, $771,709, 21 Cardinal Ln Unit 171

Toll Ma Land III LP, Charlene Ann Torrisi, $725,542, 19 Cardinal Rd Unit 172

Brian J & Arcilia Boyson, Alvaro Rodrigo Bendrell De Bracamonte & Maria Carlin Gavilano, $720,000, 41 Greenside Way

Mohammed Bhalla & Houda Elibrahimi, Grace Boule, $715,000, 1 Sadie Ln

Mia Investments Properties LLC, Willy K Musasa & Anne K Nzinga, $630,000, 25 Meriline Ave

Grace T Busta & Thomas M Busta Sr Est & Brenda A Busta Ind Tr & Thomas M Busta Jr Ind Tr & Brian C Busta Third Party Special Needs Trust , Thomas M Busta Jr & Virginia Busta, $620,000, 518 Merrimack St

Nabil Ammar & Kaoutar Maane, Fatoumata Weah & Otis Prince Weah, $615,000, 28 Sycamore Rd

Tomas & Cathleen M Alessandri, Enzo & Mimmi Ricciardi, $600,000, 7 Chippy Ln

Caroline J Goldstein, Kathleen H Toppi Tr & Toppi 2016 Trust , $589,900, 19 Hopkins Cir Unit 44

Stephen J & Sonya M Kelley, Matthew Elios, $582,000, 3 Cox Ln

David & Sally C Fredella, North East Educational & Developmental Supports Center Inc, $547,400, 11 Brook St

Sonya & Phillip Bird, Waleska Caceres, $540,000, 5 Ridge St

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Rafaella Viana & Diogo Dias Gomes, Naresh Kumar Velmurugan, $514,000, 31 Sea St

Paul T Concemi & Lauren & Mary E McDonough Tr & Concemi Family Realty Trust, Paul T Concemi & Lauren McDonough, $500,000, 156 Jackson St

Center Street Development LLC, Deborah C De Camargo, $495,000, 19 Oak Meadow Ln

Jenniferlee L Polanco/Jenniferlee Polanco, Micky Mark A Delacruz & Shenah O Dela Cruz, $480,000, 168 Jackson St

Arthur & Dawna Circelli, Regina M Currid Tr & Currid 2021 Trust, $475,000, 57 Woburn St

Christian Taveras, Austin T & Shania R Allocco, $470,000, 3 Lavoie Ave

Andrea Perkins, Bunnoeun Edward Ou, $440,000, 10 Windsor St

William M Kannan Sr, Ashley Rapoza, $439,900, 386 Oak St

Eileen M Asoian & Janet Courtemanche, Spencer Talmage & Margaret Farley, $435,000, 15 Daley Ave

Winwin Properties LLC, Daniel Hernandez Peralta & Xiomara Suarez Oyola, $415,000, 233 Oakland Ave Unit 2

Steven K Hemingway & Scot E Gabriel & Anne M Stack Est, Samuel Taveras, $396,000, 1065 Riverside Dr

Barbara A Fardy, Marie W Victor, $391,000, 1 Riverview Blv Unit 3-201

Richard D & Linda D Trs & R & L LaCassee Revocable Trust, Ryan Gagne & Frank L McCann Sr, $389,900, 18 Penobscott Cir Unit 2

Jack Lombardo & Justine Lombardo & John Lombardo , Richard W & Victoria H Gaskell, $350,000, 21 Oak St Unit F

Calvin R Snell, Parisa Bonvan, $325,000, 945 Riverside Dr Unit 6D

W Russell McComish Jr Tr & McComish Irrevocable Trust, LRIM Properties LLC, $300,000, 45 Christopher Dr Unit 99

Ken Thu & Linda Kiang, Quang Hieu & Loi Nguyen N Tram, $300,000, 49-51 Adelaide Ave Unit 2

Sean T & Erin E Henrick, Benjamin Miller & Danna Martinez Miller, $265,000, 51A Ford St

Gisela Hidalgo, Kevin Alan Robertson, $255,000, 15B Pilgrim Cir Unit B

Melissa J Ganias, Five C Construction LLC, $245,000, 1A, 5 Frost Ave

Xing Hu & Qun Feng Huan, Zolgalys Sanchez, $215,000, 18E Constitution Wy Unit 18E

Adam D Zapris, Jaspreet Kaur, $215,000, 51 Ford St Unit C

Kenneth S Bergeron, Rechdan Mystic Street Methuen LLC, $193,000, Mystic St Unit 71-23

Karl W & Irene G Schroeder, Tewksbury Villiage Condominium LLC, $180,000, 141 Harris St

Dorothy L Gagnon Tr & PDP Trust, DFF Group Inc, $1,500, Simone Lot

NORTH ANDOVER

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NA Main Street LLC,Premier Commercial Properties LLC,$1,900,000,129-131 Main St

John & Lisa Gutkoski,William Edmund Czerepak & Erica Kensy Czerepak Trs & Czerepak Family Trust,$1,376,500,121 Carter Field Rd

Charles M & Elizabeth S Marshall,Liam & Kaelyn Pushee,$1,265,000,667 South Bradford St

Matthew B Levis,Ryan & Bianca Millerick,$1,050,000,116 Sherwood Dr

Carmen A & Debra Coviello,Philip & Marisa Zelfond,$1,000,000,114 Old Farm Rd

17 Massachusetts Ave LLC,Right Place LLC,$950,000,17 Massachusetts Ave

William E & Erica K Czerepak,James M Schortemeyer & Caroline A Sheedy,$925,500,1260 Salem St

Dale W Cripe,James Rao Sr,$822,500,87 Mayflower Dr Unit 14

Maureen Sloyan Tr & John J Sloyan

REAL ESTATE: PAGE 27

HERO: FROM PAGE 1

her deployment with NMCB 27, she met her husband, Kevin.

One of her most memorable days in Iraq, was the day her convoy ran over an Improvised Explosive Device or IED. The convoy arrived at its destination, a forward operating base, or FOB, and the convoy members were informed they had hit an IED enroute. No one is certain whether the device was a "dud" or did not explode due to electronic counter measures the sailors took.

After retiring from military service, Chief Lynch, began a career in banking, first working for TD Bank, then moving on to commercial banking, now working at Panacea Financial, where she specializes in serving the medical community.

Petty Officer Kevin Lynch started his career as a mechanic working for a car dealership in Woburn, Massachusetts. He served as a mechanic in the US Navy with Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 27, 7, and a second tour with 27. He also served with Amphibious Construction Battalion 2 and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 302. He served with the Navel Security Forces at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Naval Shipyard.

Serving with the Seabees, shortly after the attacks on 9/11 he was deployed to US Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom supporting Camp X-Ray and Camp Victory where the Taliban Detainees were housed, and Al Asad Iraq where he supported both the US Navy and the US Marine Corp Expeditionary Force (MEF I and MEF II). The US Navy Seabees are heavily relied on to construct forward operating bases and transportation equipment to accomplish the mission, Seabees such as Construction Mechanic First Class Kevin Lynch, are at the tip of the spear keeping the entire motor pool ready to go. During his time in Iraq, Lynch earned his third Navy Achievement Medal. What he is most proud of during his navel career, Lynch was a member of the Navy Funeral Honors Team, rendering Honors to 700+ fallen Veterans. Lynch retired from the Navy reserves after 21 years of service.

A Haverhill Police Sergeant, he currently supervises the Traffic & Safety Unit, School Resource Officers, and the Behavioral Response Unit. Using his GI Bill benefits, he has earned an Associates, a Bachelors, and two Master level Degrees. His passion is playing goalie on his ice hockey team and as a salute to the US Navy Seabees, the Seabee logo is on his goalie mask. Kevin is also an active member of the Board of Directors for the Haverhill Veterans Alliance.

The couple's blended family consists of one son, four daughters, and two grandchildren. Serving together in Iraq, and Shannon's deployment to Afghanistan, Kevin's deployment to Cuba, truly make this Haverhill couple, "Heroes in our Midst"

The Dracut American Legion asks all World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans, to call (603) 518-5368 and sign up for an Honor Flight to the Memorials in Washington DC! Veterans of all eras are asked to go on the American Legion's Web site www.legion.org, and join the American Legion; our mission is working with Congress, Veterans, and the Community, preserving our Veteran's Benefits for future generations and serving all Veterans and their families.

Valley Patriot John Ratka Hero Veteran Award winner Kevin Lynch of Haverhill (left) being introduced by former winner and hero vet Randy Carter with former MA Secretary of Veteran Services Francisco Urena.

John Cuddy served in the US Navy's Construction Battalions (also known as the Seabees) after retiring from the US Navy; he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in economics from the University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 26 years. If you know a World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam War Veteran who would like their story told, please email him at John.Cuddy@Yahoo.com ◊

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Should Attorneys Continue to be Above the Law

GRACEMARIE
& JOYCE TOMASELLI
VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTORS

If your answer is NO, you need to speak up and contact the Committee on the Judiciary to support Senate Bill S. 1131 (fka SD.1941) 'An Act to strengthen rules governing attorney conduct; penalties for misconduct.' Call the Joint Committee on the Judiciary: Senate (617) 722-1120 and the House (617) 722-2396.

We learned that at least one dozen (12) states already have laws that do NOT give absolute immunity to attorneys who commit judicial misconduct – these 12 states protect the people/litigants from opposing attorneys who lie to judges, conceal relevant evidence, engage in fraudulent misconduct; this means the attorney(s) "committed fraud on the court" during a judicial proceeding.

We modeled our Senate Bill S.1131 using the current laws in the following 12 states: Arkansas, California, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Let's stop absolute immunity currently granted by judges to attorneys even though "you proved" that these attorneys made intentional false statements in court (lied) to deceive the judges in order to win.

What this means is that absolute immunity gives attorneys complete immunity from lawsuits for damages. Even though attorney(s) take an oath to be honest in court, when they are not, they get immunity from a lawsuit because in Massachusetts attorneys are protected. These "bad" unethical attorney(s) intentionally ruin you, in so many ways, including losing your money, possessions, time and so much more!

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If your answer is YES, contact the Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government to support Senate Bill S.1326 'An Act to provide clarification to Mass General Laws' legislation to provide clarification of betterments with regard to sewer projects and sewer user fees. Call the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government: the Senate (617) 722-1291 and the House (617) 722-2430.

In addition, we want to thank Joe Corcoran for submitting to Tom Duggan "What Ever Happened To Justice" published last month in the March 2023 Valley Patriot.

Read Tom Duggan, Investigative Reporter, many articles on the Tomaselli sisters and the Town of Salisbury, and Salisbury's attorneys. These are a few links to his articles: https://valleypatriot.com/an-80-million-lie-sisters-discover-sewer-project-100-paid-for-with-grant-money/

and https://valleypatriot.com/letter-from-tomaselli-sisters-on-the-80-million-lie-in-salisbury/

and https://valleypatriot.com/salisbury-continues-telling-80-million-lie-to-bankruptcy-court/

We have a Facebook page 'An $80 Million Lie: Sisters Discover Sewer Project 100% Paid with Grants' that has many government documents and more: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064681537720

Tomaselli sisters contact information: Facebook: An $80 Million Lie: Sisters Discover Sewer Project 100% Paid with Grants and Facebook: Mangia A Café Restaurant ◊

THE DOCTOR IS IN!

Edema, Lower Leg Swelling From Blood Pooling

Dr. Pierre Ghassibi
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Yes, heart failure, renal failure, cirrhosis … but the commonest causes are not these.

By far, the commonest cause is obesity in a person who sits the whole day: the compression at the level of the posterior thighs prevents venous return, but also the muscles are not moving to milk the venous blood up. With time, the tissues of the legs lose their elasticity and lose their recoil property and the skin gets spongy and prone to breakdown and chronic ulceration...

Some medications can also dilate the vessels and along with the above cause make things worse. These include Amlodipine, Nifedipine, Pioglitazone , anti-inflammatory meds, Gabapentin, oral Steroids and to a certain extent narcotics. Some anticonvulsants do this too.

Management consists of changing or lowering the dose of the culprit medication , compression, elevation when possible, and avoiding sitting all the time.

A DVT (deep venous thrombosis = blood clot), even with treatment, may end up affecting the function of the valve of the vein involved and cause permanent edema.

A one sided edema should raise the possibility of an acute blood clot and if this is ruled out, a search for a mass higher up blocking the venous return would be in order. I had a patient with a tumor in the pelvis that caused unilateral edema. A CT scan showed the tumor.

Venous ulcers are best treated with elevation, compression, exercise, local hygiene with soap and water and surgical dressings. Topical antibiotics are effective for very superficial ulcers and very often cause dermatitis if used for more than a week. Bad infection may respond to systemic antimicrobials. For prevention, on intact unbroken skin, I use topical 2.5 % to 5 % Benzoyl Peroxide gel if infections are a frequent occurrence. It removes and kills infective organisms, and it does not lead to resistance.

After 10 days, the skin is sanitized and I continue with only soap and water. Bactericidal soaps have led to resistant bacteria; simple soap is better.

Marked leg compression stockings half way up may hinder venous return and increase the risk of blood stagnation and clot formation. ◊

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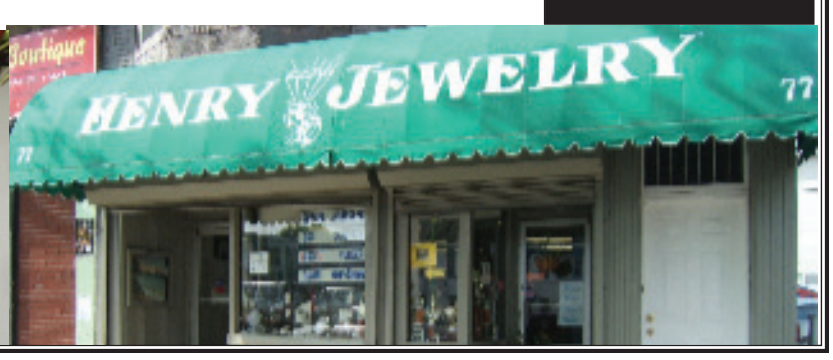

TV TALK with BILL CUSHING

"Shrinking"

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

'Shrinking' is the latest addition to the Apple TV+ family, an anticipated new comedy series from two of the creators behind Ted Lasso, Bill Lawrence and Brett Goldstein.

The show centers around the lives of three therapists at the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Center in Pasadena, California. First we have Jimmy (Jason Segel). Jimmy is having a very rough go of it lately. His life has been in a spiral since his wife Tia died a year ago. He spends so much time in drug and booze filled states that his next-door neighbor Liz (Christa Miller) has essentially taken over the parenting duties of his 17-year-old daughter Alice. Then we have Gabby (Jessica Williams), who was Tia's best friend, is upbeat and confident and hilarious, but she might not be as cool as she claims to be about her recent divorce. Finally, there's their legendary, old-school, perpetually crusty boss Paul (Harrison Ford), who has been diagnosed with Parkinson's and is finding it increasingly difficult to disguise the symptoms.

Jimmy struggles to stay engaged at work as his regular patients recite their various complaints. Exhausted and pushed to the limits of decorum by a woman who's forever making excuses for her emotionally abusive husband, Jimmy decides to tear down the limitations meant to protect and clarify a therapeutic relationship and lashes out at her and tells her to leave her husband or he is done with her. To his surprise, that approach is very effective.

Paul warns Jimmy that this "psychological vigilante" approach is not good and that he shouldn't continue using it. Jimmy doesn't listen and decides to try the same approach with his newest patient, Sean. Sean (Luke Tennie) is a military vet who keeps getting into violent altercations with strangers. It's Jimmy and Sean's story, two broken people trying to help each other, that serves as the centerpiece of 'Shrinking.' If that show dwelled too much on Jimmy's unorthodox therapy approach, it might have grown tiresome. But that's just one of several intriguing story threads. The writers do an amazing job of jumping back and forth between various characters and their relationships on a level rarely seen in a TV comedy.

Paul has park-bench meetings with Alice and offers her fatherly advice even as he struggles to connect with his own estranged daughter (Lily Rabe). Jimmy reconnects with his best friend Brian (Michael Urie) after shutting him out of his life. At first, Liz and Gabby can't stand each other, but then they bond over morning hikes and early evening wine. 'Shrinking' explores how we bridge the gap between knowing what we need to do to become happier, healthier versions of ourselves and actually doing it.

The cast is terrific. Segel is well suited to play this self-deprecating character that wears his heart on his sleeve. Jessica Williams as Gaby is a scene stealer. She is the breakout star of 'Shrinking'.' Gaby is such a funny, strong, and complex character, and Williams plays her perfectly. Ford is an absolute delight. Paul is just the right character for this stage of Ford's career, and 'Shrinking' allows him to do some really terrific work. It's the kind of role that allows for heartfelt moments alongside comedic sequences.

The rest of the cast all fit in well and do great jobs. Crista Miller and Ted McGinley are hilarious as Jimmy's friends and neighbors. Lukita Maxwell and Luke Tennie more than hold their own in this powerhouse cast, giving emotional performances as Sean and Alice.

'Shrinking' is a consistently entertaining, funny series that has its heart in the right place. It's a show that's definitely worth your time.

'Shrinking' has already been renewed for a 2nd season and is available to stream on AppleTV+.

If you have any questions about TV, you can email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column. Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ◊

King David and Bathsheba
(Cover-up to Repentance)

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

This well-known story in the Bible brings with it Melodrama, Intrigue, and Craftiness, all the makings of a daytime soap opera. But this one did happen.

It begins at a time when Kings were supposed to be going to battle, but King David decides to stay in Jerusalem. We read the following in 2 Samuel 11:1, "It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem." NKJV. Since David was King, no one dared to question his actions. Next, we read in 2 Samuel 11:2-5, "Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. 3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" 4 Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. 5 And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child." NKJV.

The Cover-Up

King David comes up with a perfect plan that would cover up the fact that he slept with another man's wife and is now pregnant. He sends for her husband Uriah who is on the battlefield and when he arrives he tells him to go home and be with his wife, but Uriah would not cooperate with the King's plan which infuriates the King, so king David asks Uriah why he would not go home, which we read in 2 Samuel 11:11, "And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." NKJV.

So, King David spends the next day and a half trying to convince Uriah to sleep with his wife, but Uriah was devoted to the King's Army and his fellow soldiers. What happens next is most definitely not one of King David's finest acts which we read about in 2 Samuel 11:14-17, "In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die." 16 So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there were valiant men. 17 Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And some of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also." NKJV. Then Joab sent a messenger to King David with the news that Uriah died in battle.

Continuing with the cover-up, King David sends the messenger back with these words found in 2 Samuel 11:25, "Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.' So encourage him." NKJV. King David thinks his cover-up scheme is safe and secure, but he is forgetting that someone else greater than him knows all that the King has done and is not pleased with him at all. 2 Samuel 11:27, "…But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD." NKJV.

The Confrontation and God's Intervention!

The Bible is clear that God was not pleased with King David's actions so He sent Nathan to King David with a story so riveting that it goes right to the King's heart. Nathan reported to David about two men in his kingdom, one rich and one poor. The rich man had an abundance of herds of lambs while the poor man had only one little lamb which he had all his life. One day a stranger came to visit the rich man and instead of preparing for him a lamb out of his many, he took the one lamb belonging to the poor man and prepared it for his visitor. King David became furious with the rich man and said surely this man should die! At this point, Nathan looks at King David and says, "You are the Man!" 2 Samuel 12:7-9, "Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more! 9 Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon." NKJV.

I will continue this story in my column next month, Part 2, King David's Road to Repentance and Grace! We shall see that there was no one and still even today no one who is so far outside the will of God that His Grace and Mercy can't find them! Psalm 23:6. A Psalm of David.

Love you all, Peter Larocque ◊

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Lawrence General, Top Notch Scholars Create New Health Care Internship

Partnership matches hospital mentors with high school students from Greater Lawrence area to gain career experience, spark interest in health care industry

March 9, 2023, Lawrence, MA – Lawrence General Hospital welcomed the first 24 new high school interns from Top Notch Scholars' Healthcare Internship Academy to the hospital Wednesday, marking a new partnership to cultivate youth interest in the health care industry while matching students with Lawrence General mentors to gain career experience.

The effort, made possible by Lawrence General Hospital President and CEO Deborah J. Wilson and Top Notch Scholars' Founder Joanna de Peña, represents a joint desire to expose students to health care and a commitment to workforce diversity.

"Lawrence General Hospital has a proud history of helping young people in our community learn from Lawrence General mentors, build their network and gain experience in health care," said Wilson. "While we've welcomed interns from area schools for a long time, this partnership with Top Notch Scholars marks the first time working with a youth leadership and development program and we couldn't be more excited to open our doors to this enthusiastic group."

De Peña, named a 2021 "rising star" by the Lawrence Partnership, founded Top Notch Scholars seven years ago to provide mentoring and leadership opportunities to support the dreams of local high school youth by helping them build self-esteem, healthy relationships, a spirit of inquiry and college and career awareness.

De Peña first met Wilson at the 2021 Lawrence Partnership event, where the two began to talk of a partnership with Lawrence General.

"Lawrence General is a workforce leader in the community so when President Wilson approached Top Notch, we knew it was a natural fit. It just makes sense," de Peña said.

Students will assist in various departments throughout the hospital this spring, including the Emergency Center, maternity, and pediatrics. They attend area high schools including Lawrence High, Greater Lawrence Technical School, Notre Dame Christo Rey and Central Catholic.

According to de Peña and Top Notch Scholars Vice President Jenny Alvarez, the program has already begun to pay dividends through the existing relationships students have formed with mentors including LGH Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Officer Virgilio Velez, RN, and Dr. Luis Quiel, Lawrence General's hospitalist program director.

As de Peña explained, mentorship with Lawrence General staff members makes a career in healthcare a reality for students who attend Top Notch classes a mere stone's throw from the hospital campus.

"It's one thing to see the hospital and wonder if it's possible, but when we bring nurses and doctors to our office to speak to our kids, or our kids have the opportunity for real life experience through an internship, it becomes possible," de Peña said.

Alvarez said Dr. Quiel had such an inspiring conversation with 16-year-old Kasdaniel Reyes that the Lawrence High student opted to enroll in the Lawrence General internship program.

"He's had a dream to become a surgeon," Alvarez said of Reyes. "We talk a lot about being intentional and goal setting. When we told him we had a relationship with Lawrence General and told him we could introduce him to a doctor, his eyes lit up. We introduced him to Dr. Luis Quiel and now this student's dream became a reality."

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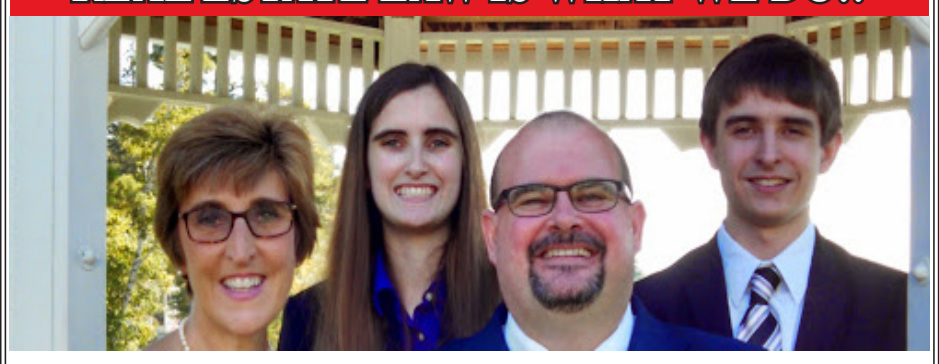

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